

CITY OF BALTIMORE
Sheila Dixon, Mayor
Department



Baltimore City Fire Department
William J. Goodwin, Jr. - Chief of Fire

401 E. Fayette Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

PRESS RELEASE

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Fire Department Mourns Loss Of Senior member and Bureau Commander

The Baltimore City Fire Department is deeply saddened by the recent and unexpected loss of our most senior member and Bureau Commander John R. Frazier. Chief Frazier was born on March 31, 1936 and passed away on Friday, April 6, 2007 after suffering a heart attack and was pronounced at St. Joseph's Medical Center.

Chief Frazier's tenure with the Baltimore City Fire Department spans more than fifty years. Entering the department in the 1954, Chief Frazier exemplified a true affinity and passion for the fire service that was demonstrated in every aspect of his career.

Chief Frazier was motivated to pursue a career in the fire service, after his father and neighbor role modeled fire fighters for many years. His first memory of the fire service was of Santa Claus leaving a shining pedal fire engine for Christmas. Growing up in a community serviced by a local fire station, Chief Frazier (Jack) as he was affectionately known would run to the front door whenever he heard Engine Company 30 and Truck Company 8 responding to a fire. Almost on a daily basis, John R. would pass the fire house and look inside to check the Watch Desk Status Board. At the age of ten, he would close the front doors and guard the station when companies were out of service. John R. soon mastered the independent signals for In and Out of service for fire department units.



Ever industrious John R. became a newspaper carrier, and arranged to have the old News Post paper bundle dropped off at the station, where firemen would stuff the inserts prior to his arrival. As a student at the Baltimore City College, his first extracurricular activity was the Civil Defense Club. During his service, he witnessed what was the worst tragedy ever experienced on February 16, 1955, the collapse of the Tru-Fit Clothing Store, located at 507-509 E. Baltimore Street. On the night of this catastrophe, his father responded on the seventh alarm as Acting Battalion Chief #3.

Engine Company #15, Groups 2, 3, 4 and 5 were shorthanded by 4 spots on the roster, and John R. working for the Bureau of Water Supply had the opportunity to fulfill his dreams and transferred over to the Fire Department where he was assigned to Engine Company #15.

Chief Frazier tenaciously promoted through the ranks of the department, finally fulfilling the role as the department's Legislative Liaison with Annapolis. His commitment to his country involved service in the U.S. Coast Guard. Chief Frazier did not only serve in the fire department, but was a very active member within the community and state. With his innovative personality, he was instrumental in setting up the current structure of Maryland's Emergency Medical Services system. He was also involved in crafting the Legislation of HB 1222 which outlined the governance of the State EMS and Trauma System. John R. was an original member of the Maryland EMS Board appointed by Governor Schaffer, where he served until 2005. During his tenure with the EMS Board, he served as Co-Chair of the Joint EMS Board/Statewide EMS Committee. He was currently serving on the Helicopter Replacement Committee, the Statewide Infection Control Committee, Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services System (MIEMSS) Legislative Committee, and the Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Task Force.

When asked about his career, he spoke about how thankful he was for the opportunity to serve the citizens of Baltimore City, to work and develop friendships with several thousand men and women, uniformed and civilian, and to interact with numerous branches of the local, state and federal government, even more to receive over 1300 paychecks.

Chief Frazier has served on numerous committees and affiliate organizations to include, Annual Medals Day Committee, Fire Prevention Committee, Fire Chief's Annual Golf Tournament Committee, as well as serving as a Senior Staff member and advisor. He received a number of distinguished honors such as the Chief of Fire Departments Special Recognition Award.

In six decades, John R. has had the privilege of serving 6 Mayors, 6 Fire Chiefs, and 3 Acting Fire Chiefs. His proudest moment was being promoted to Battalion Chief, becoming the first son of a Baltimore City Fire Department Battalion Chief to become a Chief.

Chief Frazier credits the success of his career to the strong support of his wife, Janet, and his daughters Ellen and Jennifer, as well as the inspiration from his parents. His best advice to members, "Complete the journey by becoming all that you can be".

Chief Frazier was laid to rest on April 10, 2007 at Druid Ridge Cemetery, Baltimore, MD.

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